

GREAT RIVER
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January 19, 2005

Mr. Robert Schroeder, Chair
MN Environmental Quality Board
658 Cedar St., RM 300
St. Paul, MN 55155

SUBJECT: Rockville 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Upgrade

Dear Mr. Schroeder:



In accordance with the Power Plant Siting Act, this letter serves as the required notice to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Chair that Great River Energy (GRE) and Stearns Electric Association (SEA) have elected to seek local approval for the construction of 3.75 miles of new 115 kV transmission line and a substation upgrade in Stearns County, Minnesota. A Conditional Use Permit application was delivered to Stearns County on January 18, 2005. Stearns County has been informed that they have 60 days to refer the permitting process to the EQB.

The proposed transmission line and substation upgrade project would be located north of the City of Rockville, completely within Stearns County. The new facility will meet the growing electrical demand and improve the service and reliability of electric facilities in the area. A fact sheet that provides more detail on the project is enclosed.

Part of this transmission system upgrade will require modifying the "in and out" configuration at Xcel Energy's existing Sauk River Substation to a 4-position ring bus configuration. However, this substation modification work is covered by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) rules under permitted uses and therefore is not part of this permitting effort.

Questions regarding this project should be directed in writing to Don Adams, Director of Environmental Services for Stearns County at Administration Center Room 343, 705 Courthouse Square, St. Cloud, MN 56303. I can also be reached at 763-241-2337. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Rick Heuring
Rick Heuring
Field Representative

Enclosure

CC: EQB General List of Interested Persons – w/encl.
Tim Weir, Stearns Electric Association– w/o encl.
Jennifer Buckentine, Stearns County – w/o encl.

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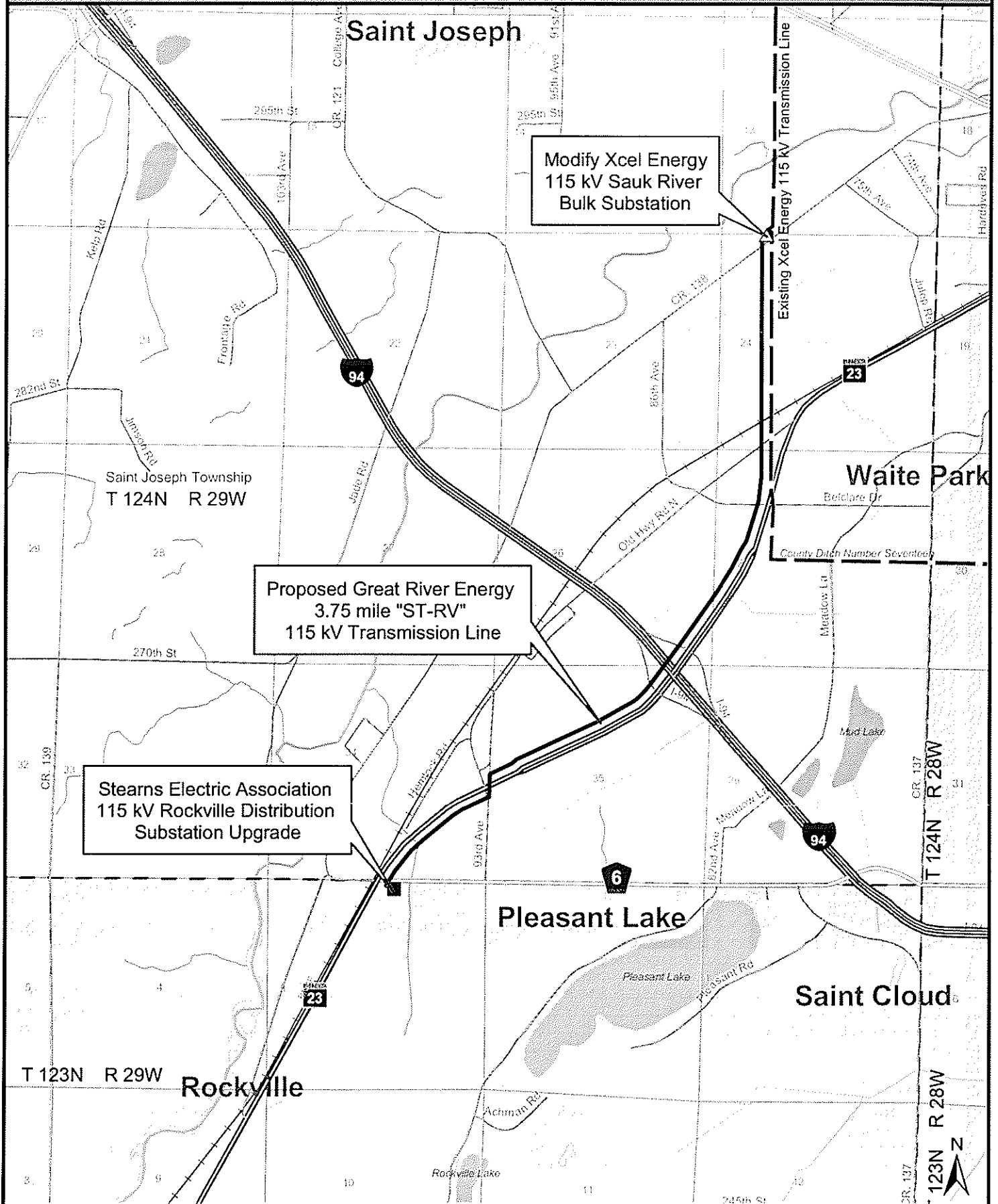
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PROJECT MAP




Rockville Substation / ST-RV 115 kV Transmission Line project



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PROJECT NEED

The existing electric transmission and distribution system serving the area in the vicinity of Rockville needs to be upgraded to provide better reliability and increased capacity to serve the increasing load. The existing 34.5 kV system in this area is weak and historically has not satisfied reliability standards. Conversion to a 115 kV system will allow Stearns Electric Association (SEA) to better transfer loads between multiple distribution substations during emergency situations and during routine switching operations. Furthermore, upgrading to a 115 kV system in the Rockville area will meet SEA customer's electric needs for several decades.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project includes the construction of 3.75 miles of 115 kV transmission line by Great River Energy (GRE) of Elk River, MN. GRE is an electric generation and transmission cooperative providing wholesale electricity to SEA. The new transmission line will deliver electricity from the existing Xcel Energy Sauk River Substation to SEA's Rockville distribution substation. The Rockville distribution substation is located at the intersection of Trunk Highway 23 and Stearns County Road 6. The proposed transmission line route will generally follow State Highway 23 from the Rockville Substation northeasterly to where it intersects an existing Xcel Energy 115 kV transmission line. The new transmission line will continue northerly, parallel with the existing Xcel Energy line to the Sauk River Substation (see **Project Map on back**). **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** illustrate typical 115 kV transmission line structures and a typical 115 kV distribution substation that will be utilized for this project. To make provisions for connecting the proposed GRE 115 kV transmission line, Xcel Energy plans to convert its existing in and out 115 kV Sauk River Substation to a 4-position ring bus configuration. **Figure 3** illustrates the existing Sauk River Substation.

Figure 1:
Typical GRE
115 kV Structure

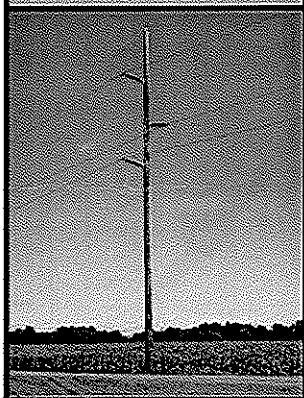


Figure 2:
Typical Stearns Electric
115 kV Distribution Substation



Figure 3:
Existing Xcel Energy
Sauk River Substation



PROJECT SCHEDULE

Conditional Use Permitting	_____	Fall, 2004
Easement Acquisition	_____	Spring, 2005
Transmission Line / Substation Construction	_____	Fall, 2005
Energize	_____	December, 2005

CONTACTS

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1/18/2005